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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1265  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0044

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001474

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA DAVID MCFARLAND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/04/2018

TAGS: ETRD ETTC PREL CU IT

SUBJECT: ITALY COUNTRY REVIEW FOR SUSPENSION OF TITLE III  
OF THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: STATE 126578

Classified By: Poloff Gabriel Escobar for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶11. (U) This message is post's response to reftel request for updated information necessary for the President's consideration of continued suspension of Title III of the LIBERTAD Act.

¶12. (C) There has been no significant change in Italian relations with Cuba over the past six months. There were no high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and Italy during this period. Italy continues to support the EU's common position on Cuba, including the dual-track approach of engagement with the Cuban government and outreach to the democratic opposition. Italy does not participate in exchange programs with Cuba.

¶13. (C) Italian tourism to Cuba declined by 7% in 2007. Italy is Cuba's eighth-largest commercial partner, with \$414 million in trade in 2007. Italian trade with Cuba was up 20% in the first half of 2008. A total of 49 Italian businesses and 5 business consortiums participated in the November 2008 Havana Trade Fair, making Italy's presence one of the largest. The most significant Italian investment in Cuba remains Telecom Italia's ownership stake of Etecsa, the Cuban telecom monopoly. The Italian government distributed 33,333 euros in 2008 to the Red Cross for post-hurricane humanitarian assistance in Cuba.

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